

IInd EUROPEAN INTER-PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE ON SPACE (CIEE)

Rome, 14 October 2000

Final Declaration

The Parliamentary Groups on Space of France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom, meeting from 12 to 14 October 2000 to celebrate the 2nd Session of the European Inter-parliamentary Conference on Space (CIEE), under the rotating presidency of the Italian Group, express their satisfaction for the accession of the Parliamentary Groups of Belgium and Spain. Furthermore, they reaffirm their common will, expressed during their first meeting in France last year, to consider the Conference as a "permanent forum" for parliamentary consultation to address European space interests, to promote an open exchange of information, to foster mutual understanding, to formulate guidelines and legislative approaches in order to develop activities in a sector of strategic importance for Europe.

The Parliamentary Group of the Federal Republic of Germany cannot take part in the Conference because of unpostponeable institutional engagements, but it has confirmed its intention to participate in the activities of CIEE as a permanent member.

The Parliamentary Groups of Belgium and Spain have joined the CIEE as permanent members.

CIEE members wish that the relations between ESA, the European Commission and the national Agencies or similar Governmental Bodies be intensified and an information network be put in place, also with the main operators in this area, and with the governmental agencies of the countries which are not members of the E.U. nor of ESA, above all with the Mediterranean countries engaged in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership of the Barcelona Declaration of 1995, in order to foster an exchange of expertise to solve problems of common interest. Furthermore the members of the European Interparliamentary Conference on Space hopes that the European Parliament will want to participate with a delegation in the future activities of the CIEE as permanent invitee.

In this connection, they support the initiative aimed at promoting in the short term a meeting among current and potential players in Italy.

The Conference reaffirms the common will to ensure the European Union's strategic autonomy in the space sector, in particular as far as critical technologies are concerned, and, in any case, taking into account potential market windows and potential economic returns.

In this context, the Conference expresses its interest in the consolidation process of the European space industry, hoping that it can strengthen the international competitiveness of leading companies and of small and medium enterprises; it also confirms the need for supporting their efforts.

The Conference follows with interest the European Commission's general policy aimed at creating a "European Research Area" and underlines the need for a close examination of the aspects concerning available human and financial resources in order to promote research activities in the space sector.

Special attention has been focused on the need for harmonising space legislations, at least within the European Union.

The Parliamentary Groups have reiterated the hope expressed on the occasion of the 1st European Inter-parliamentary Conference on Space on ESA's involvement also with respect to the consideration of technical-regulatory issues. They call upon the Agency to give fresh impetus to the studies currently under way, especially with a view to harmonising the rules on satellite control and management and to making the body of data gathered by satellite infrastructure available for the whole community.

The Groups welcome the proposal made by ESA to set up a Secretariat with the aim of providing the CIEE with information consistently with the dynamic characteristics of the space sector.

The political and programme resolutions, annexed to this Declaration, express the common views of the Conference participants.

The Belgian Space Parliamentary Group is invited to examine the possibility of organising the European Interparliamentary Conference on Space to be held in 2001.

The following European Interparliamentary Conference on Space will take place in the United Kingdom in 2002.

Italy will hold the presidency until the new Presidency takes over.

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THEMES AND POLITICAL AND PROGRAMME RESOLUTIONS

THEMES

- N° 1 Europe's strategic autonomy in the space sector.
- N° 2 Corporate internationalisation, competitiveness and trusts in the space market.
- N° 3 Adjustment and harmonisation of EU member countries' space legislation.

THEME I

EUROPE'S STRATEGIC AUTONOMY IN THE SPACE SECTOR

The strategic objective, stated by the Commission¹ and endorsed by the European Parliament², concerning the achievement of "genuine leadership of the EU on the world stage" as far as the space sector is concerned, calls for the adoption of particular measures aimed at giving the Community full autonomy and competitiveness, which are indispensable to penetrate the world market currently influenced by a near hegemony of overseas business.

In other words, this means promoting the "shaping of a spacefaring Europe" which – in addition to entailing greater involvement – also with a view to a more comprehensive debate – of the institutions concerned, especially the parliaments of member states and the European Parliament – will also require the harmonisation of national legislation on the use and exportation of the relevant products, as well as the use of adequate resources to be mainly allotted to the construction of common specific space facilities, the development of joint research activities and the launching of experimental and operational programmes.

In doing this it will be necessary to bear in mind a series of parameters, the most important of which are the financial resources which can be allotted to space, the competitiveness of Europe's industrial production, the cost/effectiveness of choices as to the materials to be used, as well as the socio-economic benefits resulting from the development of space services and uses.

This problem can no longer be postponed because, according to the Commission's objectives³, important choices will have to be made and consequent decisions will have to be adopted within this year which are bound to have a profound impact not just on space programmes, but also on other important challenges which Europe will have to face in the short and medium term.

A further major aspect concerns the wisdom – which actually becomes a necessity especially in the implementation of the common defence and security policy envisaged in the Amsterdam Treaty and reasserted by the decisions adopted by the Heads of State and Government in the European Council at Helsinki – of ensuring that Europe can act independently especially as to the availability of space infrastructure for earth observation, satellite navigation and telecommunications.

¹ Document COM (2000) 154, 9 February 2000 "Shaping the New Europe"

² Document B 5-0143, 0144.0145/2000 "European Parliament Resolution on the Commission's five-year strategic programme"

³ Final Document COM (2000) "The Commission's Work Programme for 2000"

This aspect had already been considered during the first European Interparliamentary Conference on Space (CIEE), which was held in Paris on 29 – 30 April 1999, at the end of which programme resolutions were adopted aimed at achieving the hoped-for autonomy¹.

What seems to be particularly important in this connection is the fact that Europe should have its own satellite technology; most of it is now designed by the U.S. and its use is sometimes subject to constraints or prohibited in non-European countries. These constraints often prevent European companies from participating in development programmes in non-European countries and this has a number of negative repercussions, especially at political level.

It is therefore necessary to tackle the problem – at Community level – of harmonising the export licences of space products. The current diversity, compounded by the fact that the U.S. pursues a policy of bilateral agreements with European countries, strongly hampers the E.U.'s ability to penetrate important markets such as the Asian ones.

The autonomy at issue also includes the availability – as was said during the first CIEE Conference² - of a complete family of European launchers capable of integrating the role of the "Ariane" launcher used for large payloads (Italy's proposal to develop the Vega launcher was made to this end) and of reducing the time of the preparatory work (which was also called for during the first CIEE Conference³) for research aimed at building new-generation launchers.

In agreement with the above attached political resolutions (N° 1, 2 and 3) and programme resolutions (N° 1 and 2) are submitted for approval.

¹ Policy resolutions adopted at the end of the first CIEE Conference, N° 4, 5 and 8.

² Policy resolution N° 2 adopted at the end of the first CIEE Conference.

³ Policy resolution n° 3 adopted at the end of the first CIEE Conference.

THEME II

CORPORATE INTERNATIONALIZATION, COMPETITIVENESS AND TRUSTS IN THE SPACE MARKET

The development of the space sector – at scientific, technological and industrial level – towards an accelerating globalisation of markets and the consequent need to increase competitiveness has changed and is indeed still changing production systems world-wide and has led to mergers and acquisitions of large industrial and business groups.

This phenomenon started in the U.S., where there are now two large groups in the space sector, each of which is comparable in size to the entire European space industry, and a number of relatively smaller firms which are in any case able to act as prime contractors.

In Europe there are about 70 manufacturing firms, some of which (those that can be ranked as prime contractors) started – with ten years' delay compared to the U.S. – an integration process aimed at giving them a certain degree of competitiveness with the American giants.

The other European manufacturing firms, which are smaller, provide specialised supplies and are subcontractors of the prime contractors, as the big European groups are the main outlet of the products and technology they possess.

Further merging is likely to happen which could lead to the formation of just two groups which can act as prime contractors and somehow compete with U.S. companies on the world market. As far as the domestic market is concerned, both the European Space Agency (ESA) and the National Agencies will in any case fulfil the task of ensuring that the rules of competition are respected.

The commitment at business level to a rationalisation of the system – which was already discussed during the first European Interparliamentary Conference on Space (CIEE) – would be pointless if it were not paralleled by a political commitment focusing on the support of research and development of strategic and innovative technologies and the promotion of experimental and operational programmes.

What would be needed, basically, is a form of support similar to that routinely used in the U.S., where business use funds from institutional programmes which cover over 75% of the whole turnover and where the Federal space budget (both military and civilian) is almost equivalent to the whole space budget of all the other countries in the world.

The support which has been called for above, in addition to its particular relevance for the improvement of the European production (both qualitatively and quantitatively) and the positive repercussions it will have at socio-economic level, is crucial for the achievement of the desired European autonomy in the space sector.

In this connection it should be stressed that it may be useful to provide specific budget resources aimed at promoting research into satellite technologies and developing technological projects for specific purposes accessible to businesses which are not "big" as well as small and medium-size enterprises.

Even though the European Space Agency is already well ahead in its preparation for an ESA Technology Master Plan which should be the basis for a European Space Technology Master Plan containing synergies with dual technologies, we believe it is necessary to support this initiative also in the light of the open debate and extensive exchange of views among the many players operating in this field, including national parliaments and the European Parliament, the Agencies concerned, the main users (even the potential ones, especially the countries in the EU area of concern) and Europe's leading business in the space sector.

Another aspect is the co-ordination of public demand, especially as far as the major requirements are concerned, at least within the countries party to the CIEE. This question could be dealt with in greater detail also in view of the "European partnership" which was called for at the end of the first CIEE Conference¹.

In view of the above considerations, the attached programme resolutions N° 3, 4 and 5 are submitted for approval.

¹ Policy resolution n° 6 adopted at the end of the first CIEE Conference.

THEME III

ADJUSTMENT AND HARMONISATION OF THE EU MEMBER COUNTRIES' SPACE LEGISLATION

Space activities, which were once only aimed at scientific research and at meeting the strategic requirements of the world's leading powers have gradually expanded to many more sectors, thus favouring the development of uses which, in turn, allowed the provision of various services to public and private users. Thus, a market for supplies and services has emerged which is bound to grow as satellite technologies develop.

Although the development of space activities is hindered by high costs and by the limits of the production system, one can still assume that in a not too distant future these activities will be developed unrestrainedly by producers subject to no control, with the inevitable risks associated to the employment of satellite technologies and their uses for purposes that may undermine mankind's public security, welfare and progress.

The five international agreements and the two Principles for the peaceful use of outer space approved by the UN General Assembly¹ are unsuitable especially as to the control of the relevant technologies and the regulation of their uses and the ever growing market that would ensue.

Only two European countries (United Kingdom and Sweden) have comprehensive legislation on space mainly based on principles regulating accountability. In the other European countries there are sectoral regulations which in any case do not tackle the many problems arising from the presence in the atmosphere of a substantial number of active (about 1.000) and non-active (approximately 8.000) satellites.

The need for comprehensive legislation is felt by all the countries interested in the development of space research programmes and the construction of satellite infrastructure.

Within the European Space Agency, also on the basis of the hopes expressed by the Parliamentary Groups at the first European Interparliamentary Conference on Space²,

¹ The international agreements are the following :

1. "Treaty on Principles" of 27 January 1967;
2. "Agreement on the Rescue" of 22 April 1968;
3. "Convention on International Liability" of 29 March 1972;
4. "Convention on registration" of 14 January 1975;
5. "Agreement governing the Activities of States on the Moon" of 18 December 1979.

The Principles concern :

1. The use of artificial satellites for international live TV broadcasting of 10 December 1982;
2. Remote sensing of 3 December 1986.

² Political resolution n° 7 and Policy resolution n° 5.

studies are being conducted with a view to harmonising the EU countries' legislation on space.

We hope that these studies will also be speeded up in order to ensure the protection of data collected by satellites and their circulation in a commercial market that, however free, needs common rules.

It is to this end that we reaffirm the need to approve political resolution N° ... and put forward for approval the annexed programme resolution N° 6.

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Political resolutions

Resolution N° 1

In agreement with the strategic principle stated by the Commission and endorsed by the European Parliament concerning the "achievement of E.U.'s genuine leadership on the world stage", the Parliamentary Groups, reaffirm the strategic importance of the space sector. They therefore call for the adoption of adequate measures – also at the financial level – to ensure the EU's full autonomy. Within this framework, the Groups call for a greater effort to develop joint research efforts and to launch specific experimental and operational programmes.

Resolution N° 2

With a view to a welcome widening of the European Union, the Parliamentary Groups invite their respective Governments to explore the possibilities opened up by the Amsterdam Treaty in the area of "strengthened co-operation" in order to maintain the space sector along a dynamic path for the future.

Resolution N° 3

Fully convinced of the need to build up a "space-faring" Europe, the Parliamentary Groups feel it is indispensable for all institutions concerned to become more intensively involved – also with a view to thoroughly examining and updating the issues -, with special reference to the Parliaments of Member Countries and to the European Parliament, in order to harmonise the national legislations.

Resolution N° 4

Given the need to ensure that the EU may enjoy full operational autonomy for the safeguard of security, the Parliamentary Groups call for the availability of space infrastructure, in particular those that are especially suited to Earth observation, satellite navigation, telecommunications and launch services.

Resolution N° 5

While it is the task of each Group to secure an effective tie with its Government, the Conference engages in developing a dialogue with the European Commission. In this regard, an initiative should be taken in accordance with Political Resolution n° 8 with the 1st European Interparliamentary Conference on Space so that the decisions taken by the European Commission may be enlightened by the parliamentary outlook on the issues.

Resolution N° 6

The European Interparliamentary Conference on Space invites its Group Members to take turns in organising a Seminar at least every year on a specific space policy theme of common interest in agreement with the CIEE Chairman for that year. The final declaration emerging from this Seminar should then be transmitted to the CIEE and to any other body concerned.

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Programme resolutions

Resolution N° 1

As the achievement of the E.U.'s autonomy in the more relevant technologies in the space sector is considered indispensable, the Parliamentary Groups reassert the objectives called for during the first CIEE Conference (programme resolutions N° 2, 4 and 5), they welcome the progress made so far in the development of the "Galileo" satellite navigation programme – whose use cannot be limited to civilian purposes only, but should meet other security requirements – and they call on the European Commission, the European Space Agency (ESA) and the other players concerned to ensure that programmes for earth observation, telecommunications and the completion of the range of launchers be implemented in a reasonably short time.

Resolution N° 2

The Parliamentary Groups reaffirm the general policy expressed in the programme resolutions N° 3 and N° 8 adopted at the end of the first CIEE Conference and stress the need to increase the human and financial resources to be allotted to scientific programmes, included those aimed at the creation of a new generation of launchers capable of facing up the European requirements of access to the space.

Resolution N° 3

The Parliamentary Groups, in expressing their satisfaction with European Commission's general policy aimed at creating a "European Research Area", hope that impetus be given to the promotion of technological projects, within the space sector, which can ensure the participation, not only of major leading enterprises, but also of "non-prime" companies and of small and medium-sized enterprises.

Resolution N° 4

The Parliamentary Groups, deeming ESA's effort for the realisation of a "European Space Technology Master Plan" particularly useful and interesting, believe it is wise to support this initiative also in the light of the open debate and extensive exchange of views among the many relevant actors, including the national parliaments and the European Parliament, the Agencies or the similar Government bodies concerned, the main users (including the potential ones) and the major relevant industries in the sector, to ensure adequate programme harmonisation.

Resolution N° 5

Also with a view to implementing the "European partnership" called for at the end of the first CIEE Conference, the Parliamentary Groups believe it is wise to examine the possibility of co-ordinating public sector demand in the space field.

Resolution N° 6

The Parliamentary Groups, in reiterating the hope – already expressed on the occasion of the first European Interparliamentary Conference – for ESA's involvement also with respect to the examination of technical-regulatory issues, call upon the Agency together with the European Commission to give fresh impetus to studies aimed at harmonising the E.U. member countries' space legislation, especially as far as the dissemination and use of the body of data gathered by common satellite infrastructure are concerned, and to put the data collected at the disposal of national parliaments and of the European Parliament. Moreover in exploring the possible use to be made of the data, the development of commercial applications should be encouraged.